

**SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
LIFELINE/TRIBAL LINK UP ADVERTISING/OUTREACH
ANNUAL REPORT
JULY 1, 2024**

Company: Clarity Telecom, LLC d/b/a Bluepeak

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80237

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Study Area Code: 391652

Lifeline/Tribal Link Up Advertising/Outreach Activities:

Advertise in media of general distribution.* (See attached advertisement(s).)

Letter to existing and new customers regarding the availability of Lifeline/Tribal Link Up within 1st 30 days of service.* (See attached letter.)

Company's Lifeline/Tribal Link Up information in directory.

Company's Lifeline/Tribal Link Up information available on Company website.

Company's information posted on USAC website.

Other (describe):

*Required

Sioux Falls man sentenced to 30 years for first-degree rape

Trent Abrego
Sioux Falls Argus Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

A 60-year-old Sioux Falls man was sentenced to 30 years in prison for first-degree rape in a Roberts County Circuit Court, according to the South Dakota Attorney General.

Donald Anderson pleaded guilty in the case for first-degree rape of a girl who was between 5 and 8 years old at the time, according to a news release.

"The result of this case was strengthened by the work of the law enforcement officers and prosecutors involved," said Attorney General Marty Jackley. "We want to recognize this young girl's bravery in coming forward in very difficult circumstances."

The case was investigated by the South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation, Sisseton Wahpeton Tribal Law Enforcement and the Watertown Police Department.

Sioux Falls man facing federal child porn production charges

Trent Abrego
Sioux Falls Argus Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

A Sioux Falls man has been indicted by a federal grand jury for two counts of production of child pornography, United States Attorney Alison J. Ramsdell announced in a statement.

Marc Jones, 29, was indicted in May and appeared in front of a U.S. magistrate judge on June 1, where he pleaded not guilty to the indictment.

In that indictment, it's alleged Jones knowingly employed, used, persuaded, induced, enticed and coerced two minor females to engage in sexually explicit conduct knowing the depictions would be transported in interstate or foreign commerce.

If convicted, the maximum penalty is 30 years in federal prison and/or a

\$250,000 fine.

The investigation is being conducted by Homeland Security Investigations and the Sioux Falls Police Department.

Jones was remanded to the custody of the state pending trial, which doesn't have a set date yet, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May of 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat child sexual exploitation and abuse.

Jones is currently listed on the South Dakota Sex Offender Registry after he was convicted of fourth-degree rape in 2014, according to the website. In South Dakota, fourth-degree rape occurs when the victim is at least 13, but under 16, and the perpetrator is at least three years older than the victim.

Director of South Dakota Medicaid program leaves for North Dakota

Annie Todd
Sioux Falls Argus Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

The director of the South Dakota Medicaid program is leaving for a new job in North Dakota.

Sarah Aker will join the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services as the executive director of medical services, according to an announcement posted Friday on the ND HHS website. As part of her job, she will oversee Medicaid services, the Children's Health Insurance Program, autism services and other health services.

In her role as the director of the South Dakota Medicaid program through the Department of Social Services, Aker led the implementation of the Medicaid Expansion program, as well as oversight program and policy development, claims payment, provider enrollment and program integrity, according to the

announcement.

Aker has also served as the director of fiscal policy for the South Dakota Association of Healthcare Organization and worked as a Medicaid policy analyst, state plan program manager and Medicaid deputy director at DSS, according to Aker's LinkedIn.

Aker will relocate to North Dakota and start on the HHS team at the end of July.

Her departure comes weeks before Medicaid expansion enrollment begins for thousands of uninsured South Dakotans who are low-income. Applications for enrollment have already started.

South Dakota voters passed expansion in November as part of an ballot measure.

DSS has budgeted \$578.9 million to fund the benefit and administrative costs for Medicaid expansion and added 68 full-time employees to staff the department.

Polluted air a routine peril in developing world

Suman Nalshadham
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Thick, smoky air from Canadian wildfires made for days of misery in New York City and across the U.S. Northeast last week. But for much of the rest of the world, breathing dangerously polluted air is an inescapable fact of life — and death.

Almost the entire world breathes air that exceeds the World Health Organization's air-quality limits at least occasionally. The danger grows worse when that bad air is more persistent than the nightmarish shroud that hit the U.S. — usually in developing or newly industrialized nations. That's where most of the 4.2 million deaths blamed on outdoor air pollution occurred in 2019, the U.N.'s health agency reported.

"Air pollution has no boundaries, and it is high time everyone comes together to fight it," said Bhavreen Kandhari, the co-founder of Warrior Moms in India, a network of mothers pushing for clean air and climate action in a nation with some of the world's consistently worst air. "What we are seeing in the U.S. should shake us all."

"This is a severe air pollution episode in the U.S.," said Jeremy Sarnat, a professor of environmental health at Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health in Atlanta. "But it's fairly typical for what millions and millions of people experience in other parts of the world."

Last year, nine of the 10 cities with the highest annual average of fine particulate matter were in Asia — including six in India, according to air quality company IQAir, which aggregates readings from ground level monitoring stations worldwide.

Fine particulate matter, sometimes denoted as PM 2.5, refers to airborne particles or droplets of 2.5 microns or less. That's far smaller than a human hair, and the particles can reach deep into lungs to cause eye, nose, throat and lung irritation and even affect heart function.

Sajjad Haider, a 31-year-old shopkeeper in Lahore, Pakistan, rides his motorbike to work daily. He wears a mask and goggles against frequent air pollution in the city of 11 million, but suffers from eye infections, breathing problems and chest congestion that get worse as smog grows in winter.

On his doctor's advice, he relies on hot water and steam to clear his chest but said he cannot follow another bit of the doctor's advice: Don't go out on his motorbike if he wants to keep his health.

"I can't afford a car, and I can't continue my business without a motorbike," Haider said.

Last year, Lahore had the world's highest average concentration of fine particulate matter at nearly 100 micrograms per cubic meter of air. By comparison, New York City's concentration



Smog envelops the historical Badshahi mosque and the surrounding area of Lahore, Pakistan, on Nov. 27, 2021. Almost the entire world breathes air that exceeds the World Health Organization's air-quality limits at least occasionally.
K.M. CHAUDHARY/AP FILE

hit 303 at one point on Wednesday.

But New York's air typically falls well within healthy levels. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's standard for exposure is no more than 35 micrograms per day, and no more than 12 micrograms a day for longer-term exposure. New York's annual average was 10 or below the past two years.

New Delhi, a heaving city of more than 20 million where Kandhari lives, usually tops the list of the many Indian cities gasping for breath as haze turns the capital's sky gray and obscures buildings and monuments. It's worse in autumn, when the burning of crop residues in neighboring states coincides with cooler temperatures that trap deadly smoke over the city, sometimes for weeks.

Vehicle emissions and fireworks set off during the Hindu Diwali festival add to the murk, and the results include coughs, headaches, flight delays and highway pileups. The government sometimes asks residents to work from home or carpool. Some schools go online and families that can afford them turn to air purifiers.

On Thursday, even as a hazardous haze disrupted life for millions across the U.S., New Delhi still ranked as the second-most polluted city in the world, according to daily data from most air quality monitoring organizations.

Kandhari, whose daughter had to give up outdoor sports over health scares related to the bad air, said the air pollution is constant but policymakers only seem to notice its most acute moments. That has to change, she said.

"We should not compromise when it comes to access to cleaner air," Kandhari said.

Many African countries in the Sahara Desert regularly grapple with bad air due to sandstorms. On Thursday, AccuWeather gave nations ranging from Egypt to Senegal a rating of purple, for dangerous air quality. It was the same rating given this week to New York and Washington, D.C.

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*Lifeline is available on one telephone line or one internet connection per household and is non-transferable.

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Announcing the Graduation of **JANE WHITE** Jane White earned a bachelor of science degree in psychology from State University. Congratulations!

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